



AmeriCorps

2023-24 ECO AmeriCorps

Northern Waters Steward

Environmental Careers and Opportunities (ECO) AmeriCorps is an AmeriCorps program within the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VTDEC). ECO AmeriCorps is funded in part by an AmeriCorps state grant provided through SerVermont from the Corporation for National & Community Service. Service sites will provide meaningful service opportunities, regular supervision with oversight of service hours and timesheets, office space and office equipment, orientation to the worksite, additional training (as needed) and mileage reimbursement. The 2023-2024 program will begin mid-September 2023 and end in August 2024.

To be considered, service sites must:

- Demonstrate a commitment to DEIJ principles and provide a pathway for involvement at the host site and program level.
- Be a non-profit, municipality, state agency, tribal government, or educational institution.
- Provide a position description showcasing activities that are appropriate to the mission of ECO AmeriCorps.
- Provide a work environment that is ADA compliant, drug-free, and carries supplies and equipment necessary for members to perform their duties.
- Be able to provide the cash match and mileage reimbursement at the federal General Services Administration (GSA) rate for service-related travel for the member.
- Attend a supervisor orientation and be available for a minimum of two subsequent site visits and check-ins from ECO AmeriCorps staff.
- Clarify any additional responsibilities to the member according to your organization's policies.
- Notify ECO AmeriCorps staff about conflicts or other issues as they arise.

Other Requirements and Responsibilities:

- Confirm member selection, on-site training, member supervision and support throughout term of service, other forms and documentation as required by AmeriCorps, mileage reimbursement for service-related travel.
- Main supervisor must attend AmeriCorps supervisor orientation (or make special arrangements).

Host Site cost based on # of full-time employees:

Full-Time (1,700 hours over 11 months)

- 0-3 \$8,000
- 4-10 \$9,000
- >10 \$10,500

Half-Time (900 hours over 6 months)

- \$5,250 regardless of size

Quarter-Time (450 hours over 3 months)

- \$2,625 regardless of size

For more information about the host site application:

- Visit the ECO Website for supporting documents: www.ecoamericorps.org
- Or contact Program Supervisor, Dustin Bowman, dustin.bowman@vermont.gov, 802-461-5222

The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation is sponsoring AmeriCorps positions through its AmeriCorps Program. The State of Vermont is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Positions are open to all applicants without regard to race color, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, political affiliation, veteran's status, religion, or creed.

Name of Organization or Municipality:

NorthWoods Stewardship Center

Address of Organization or Municipality:

154 Leadership Driver, island Pond VT 05846

Primary Supervisor Name and Title:

Meg Carter

Primary Supervisor's email:

meghann@northwoodscenter.org

Primary Supervisor's phone #:

8025355555

Please provide a brief description of your role at your site:

Develop and track department budgets. Supervise and direct the Conservation Science department through the development and implementation of water quality and wildlife habitat conservation, restoration, and rehabilitation projects. Engage with watershed-wide decision making through a position on the Basin Water Quality Council. Co-chair the board/staff Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion committee. Strategically plan for department and organizational improvements and changes. Recruit, hire, train, and field department employees (and select AmeriCorps members). Write and execute grants to fund on-mission projects. Attend and participate in trainings, workshops, work group meetings, and conferences.

Which hosting category are you applying to? Note: ECO prefers full-time members for the vast majority of our program opportunities. Please contact Supervisor dustin.bowman@vermont.gov with questions.

Describe your proposed service project.

[Note: performance measures are based on improved acres of public land, improved miles of waterways or trails, number of Vermonters provided environmental stewardship education or training, and number of members placed in green jobs after completing their AmeriCorps service. Capacity- building activities are allowed. Please describe any projected impact.]

This person will be part of Fall Woods & Waters crew project implementation (infiltration steps, rain gardens, encapsulated soil lifts, riparian tree planting); doing writeups for projects completed; leading 1-2 winter school education programs; pulling together spring project and crew information; winter ski trail maintenance for public access; track snowfall data for the Winter Severity Index; attend partner, landowner, and work group meetings; attend and lead workshops for public education; collect seeds for riparian habitat restoration; invasive species management and removal; and various other program-related tasks.

What data collection tools will the member use to record the impacts of their service activity?

We are required by many of the funding sources we use to track project metrics throughout the phases we are involved in. We have extensive, color-coded spreadsheets that help us keep track of the different elements of our projects, including data that can describe the impacts of those projects. The member will use data sheets, spreadsheets, Survey123, and a variety of other tools to track project progress as they go.

Please provide any additional information (data, statistics, reports, etc.) that demonstrates the compelling need for the proposed position:

Since the approval of the initial Memphremagog Watershed TMDL in 2017, the state's Watershed Projects Database has been being populated with thousands of local projects in various states of completion; some merely contemplative or proposed at this point. Bringing these projects to fruition is a critical element in the strategy to reduce phosphorous inputs into surface waters and improve water quality. The goals for phosphorous reduction in the watershed are ambitious but achievable at 29%. With the continued roll-out of the Clean Water Service Provider and Basin Water Quality Council clean water project funding model, there is a lot of potential for expansion of water quality projects in our watershed. Our role in the region has been as planners, project developers, and implementers. The role of an AmeriCorps service member dedicated to promoting water quality will be to bridge the personnel and communication gaps that create barriers to project completion and expand the capacity of our organization and our region to address water quality issues to a greater level than we have ever been able to do before. Funding and capacity are often limiting factors in completing projects, and having an ECO AmeriCorps to help maintain project and initiative momentum will make meeting watershed wide phosphorus reduction goals more achievable.

What initiatives does your organization take to support diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice (DEIJ)? Please include any historical data or details for on-going strategic plans, partnerships, and projects, as relevant.

We have a hybrid staff and board Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion committee that meets monthly to discuss JEDI topics as they related to our organization and how we can meet our goals using organization-wide trainings, open discussions, and updates to organizational policies to make successful, fulfilling employment and service at NorthWoods more accessible to people of all backgrounds. We recognize that this is a never-ending commitment to changing as better information becomes available, and we invite our short-term staff and AmeriCorps members to join in our JEDI discussions to bring fresh perspective to issues that have a greater effect on short-term staff, such as campus housing. The JEDI committee currently engages 2 ECO AmeriCorps members, and we anticipate continuing to have AmeriCorps members and shorter-term staff be part of this committee. We also are committed to having residential staff on the committee. Our current second co-chair is a campus resident, and she helps give voice to residential concerns that the long-term staff don't have as much direct, recent experience with. Additionally, we have implemented several initiatives such as including indigenous land acknowledgements at staff and board meetings, revamping our website to be more accessible for people with visual impairments, and using inclusive language in our website and employment materials.

Outline how DEIJ principles can be incorporated into your organization's work moving forward. (Provide examples of any trainings, workshops, projects, partnerships, etc.)

We will be continuing to have a JEDI Committee and providing resources to that committee to empower them to take action and engage trainers from outside the organization; use fair hiring practices based on point-value scoring rubrics tied directly to position descriptions; valuing diversity as a key to strength; creating and seizing opportunities to build the universal accessibility of our programming and employment opportunities; using a values-based approach to engaging and maintaining our board of trustees; providing trainings and educational opportunities to our staff and encouraging participation in external JEDI-related trainings and activities; providing an annual all-staff training which includes several JEDI elements, but which also incorporates JEDI principles into its structure; advertising our JEDI values with every job and program we post; and re-scrutinizing ourselves as an organization to identify ways in which we can make strides in the right direction with our adherence to JEDI principles.

Describe specific challenges that your organization has faced while integrating DEIJ Principles.

Our organization has dedicated time, money, and willpower to holding ourselves to higher standards for integrating DEIJ principles into our programming and day-to-day practices. On a tiny but mighty note, it has been challenging to keep our Pride and BLM flags from fraying and tangling in the wind, but we've troubleshoot our way into some good flag rigs that keep them in tact better for longer. Our greater challenge, which we intend to continue facing and making progress to an adequate sufficiency, is incorporating JEDI principles into our day-to-day programming. We continue to ask ourselves and push ourselves to develop programs and building spaces that are meaningful and accessible to everyone. We intend to use the Universal Design principles to create spaces and experiences that don't automatically exclude people by their nature. Implementation of those principles has been a challenge and has required some "going back to the drawing board", but we have the will to continue making progress, and we will find a way.

How will the ECO member be included or supported in on-going or future DEIJ work at the organization, if they so choose?

ECO AmeriCorps members at NorthWoods (and also AmeriCorps from other programs) are encouraged to be part of the staff/board JEDI Committee. In that committee, the meeting agreements that we put forth

include making space and taking space to ensure that everyone has a voice, everyone's ideas are listened to, and everyone has a chance to share their experience in a safe space. They are also sent surveys along with the rest of the staff twice annually to gauge morale, experience, and check for holes in the safety net. Not always, but often our ECO AmeriCorps members live in subsidized on-campus housing, and participate in regular residential staff meetings to make sure any grievances are heard and addressed before they can escalate. As a supervisor, I am also open to giving members time and resources to pursue their interests, especially in the wintertime. If a member asked me whether they could participate in anything JEDI related or asked for support in their own JEDI work, I would be very likely to say yes and offer what I could.

Does the supervisor have adequate time and leadership experience to manage an ECO member? Please explain how:

Yes. Since 2016, I have supervised 7 ECO AmeriCorps, one of which was a 2-year full-time returner. Each of the experiences of supervision among these members have been unique learning experiences. I come to the role of supervisor with my eyes, mind, and heart open to continuing the experience. I am aware of the time, effort, and money involved, and I have planned accordingly in my departmental budget and my schedule planning. Additionally, I have hired on coordinators for my large projects, and they provide both additional supervision capacity from themselves and also free up some of my time to fill the role of attentive and available supervisor. It is my goal to provide rich, fulfilling, educational experiences for our AmeriCorps members to help them thrive in the field of conservation as well as in life.

Will the member have access to networking opportunities in this position? Please explain:

Yes. Throughout their service, the ECO AmeriCorps member will be serving on collaborative projects that will bring them in contact with a wide variety of partners from organizations and agencies throughout the state. In addition, NorthWoods is holding a multi-day organization-wide training at the beginning of the summer with presenters from other organizations and plenty of opportunities to meet and mingle with other field professionals. The ECO AmeriCorps member will be encouraged to attend meetings, trainings, and other events throughout the year which will provide ample opportunities for them to network with our partners.

Does your organization currently host or plan to host an AmeriCorps member from another program? If yes, briefly describe the duties of this other position.

Yes, we currently host at least 2 full-time LEAP AmeriCorps members, both in our Environmental Education department. These members staff after-school programs; lead day and overnight camps in the winter and summer; develop environmental educational materials; and lead public educational and recreational events. They are 50% of the year-round people in the Education Department, and play a large role organizationally in our culture, programming, and campus use.

Please list any clothing/equipment the member will need that you cannot provide (e.g., hiking boots, waders, raingear, etc.). Is a reliable vehicle expected? As the host site, you are responsible for providing all tools and technical equipment needed for the position (e.g., computer, phone, GPS, etc.).

Work boots, full work pants (e.g. dickies, carhartts, arborwear, etc), pocket knife, rain coat, rain pants, waterproof boots (e.g. xtratuf, wellies, mucks, bogs, barn boots, etc), work gloves, day pack & daily field essentials (i.e. sunblock, bug spray, water bottle, sunglasses, extra socks, travel snack & personal first aid kit)

Is there someone in your organization's network that might be interested in mentoring your ECO service member? *Note, 1-2 hours per month, not required

Maybe

Are you willing to search with program staff over the summer to help your ECO member secure affordable and safe housing?

Yes

Many of our members are not from Vermont and are seeking a sense of community away from home. In what ways would you be willing to help them establish community connections? (Housing, peer networks, affinity spaces, local resources, fun places to go)

I am happy to introduce our AmeriCorps members to anyone within my network, invite them to bonfires, tell them about local events, and so forth. I also support hosting ECO AmeriCorps events at NorthWoods to help promote cohort cohesion among the members.

Water Quality and Trail Improvement - Please project Impact Numbers on miles of river/stream/trail treated and/or improved.

1.5

Land Conservation and Remediation - Please project impact numbers on acres of public parks or other public, publicly managed or tribal lands improved.

8

Community Engagement Outreach and Education - Please project number of individuals receiving environmental stewardship education or training.

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AmeriCorps Position Title:

Northern Waters Steward

Program:

ECO AmeriCorps

Address: Davis 1, 1 National Life Dr Montpelier, VT 05620

Sponsoring Organization Name:

NorthWoods Stewardship Center

Sponsoring Organization's Mission:

Connecting people and place through science, education, and action

Goals for the ECO AmeriCorps Position:

Gain experience in the field of Conservation and help the Conservation Science department implement projects that have a positive water quality impact.

Essential Functions. Functions that applicant must be able to perform. These may be listed in bullet form:

- *Use hand tools safely and effectively (shovel, rake, loppers, pick-mattock, hazel hoe, Macleod, mallet, hand saw, etc)
- *Communicate clearly and professionally with staff, partners, and program participants
- *Gather and record data clearly and accurately
- *Take accurate measurements and keep accurate count of project metrics
- *Organize and disseminate project information to partners and crewmembers
- *Wrangle and educate children in winter setting
- *Operate safely outdoors in all weather and site conditions (rain, snow, high heat, hazardous locations, backcountry, frontcountry, etc)
- *Ability to perform repetitive, tedious tasks in the field and office while maintaining quality of services
- *Take clear, concise notes
- *Take report-quality photos of site and work done on site
- *Safely operate vehicles, equipment, and power tools

What are the secondary functions? These are projects or tasks that may be accomplished as time allows or applicant's interests evolve.

- *Equipment and tool care and maintenance
- *Campus gardening and landscaping for water quality

Desired Qualifications:

- *Grasp of basic principles of ecosystem health, water quality, and wildlife habitat
- *Familiarity with ArcGIS or other similar mapping software
- *Experience in hand- and power tool use
- *Experience speaking with or educating the public about environmental topics
- *Experience planting trees
- *Operate well individually or as part of a team
- *Be safety-conscious
- *Show good time management skills

*Be able to follow detailed instructions as given

Minimum Qualifications:

- Be a US citizen, a national, or legal permanent resident alien of the U.S.;
- Be at least 18 years of age upon entering the Pre-Service Orientation (there is no upper age limit);
- Be a high school graduate or have a GED certificate or be willing to work towards their GED as part of their service-year successful completion requirement. A member cannot have dropped out of high school to join AmeriCorps. If a member has a documented medical reason/professional opinion why they cannot finish high school, they might be eligible; call in this case;
- Has not been convicted of murder or sexual assault and is willing to undergo a National Service Criminal History Check;
- Must submit to Agency of Human Services checks, i.e. Adult Abuse and Child Abuse Prevention;
- Be committed to the ECO AmeriCorps program, and its ethic of service and personal and professional development of its participants;
- Have the ability and enthusiasm to drive to, attend, and participate in required trainings and events, and be prepared to drive up to 2-3 hours each way

Service Conditions (will the position be largely outside, office based, hybrid or seasonally/project dependent, in schools, etc.) *

There will be a lot of time spent in the field during the fall, spring, and summer. The winter will mostly be spent in the office reporting on the previous field season and preparing for the next one. Conditions are highly variable, but typical of a field position in conservation.

Will the member have access to "vulnerable populations"? This includes youth, elderly and individuals with disabilities.

Yes

Time Requirements:

Full time: will need to complete a minimum of 1700 service hours, serving approximately 40 hours/week over the course of the 11-month service term, September 13, 2023 - August 9, 2024

Orientation and Training:

ECO will provide members with orientation at the beginning of the service term. Host sites are expected to provide additional on-boarding training as well. Throughout the service term, ECO will provide in-person and virtual trainings to members on a variety of topics.

Benefits:

- Education award of \$6,495 (pre-tax) upon successful completion of service
- \$23,000 Living Allowance, paid bi-weekly
- Training
- Childcare assistance, if eligible
- Health Coverage
- Access to AmeriCorps Alumni Network

- Student loan forbearance and interest payments, if eligible

Evaluation and Reporting:

Mid and final performance reviews, quarterly reports, weekly timesheets, and end of service survey. Thanks for your interest!